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COMMERCIAL ADVERTISER,
Is Published Every Thursday Morning, at Six Dollars per Annum. Payable in Advance.
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THE PACIFIC Commercial Advertiser.

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PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY HENRY M. WHITNEY. HONOLULU, HAWAIIAN ISLANDS, FEBRUARY 25, 1858. SIX DOLLARS PER ANNUM. VOL. II, No. 35. WHOLE No. 87.

Commercial Advertiser.

The Hawaiian or Sandwich Islands.

The Hawaiian Archipelago consists of twelve islands, which lie in the North Pacific Ocean, between 18° 50′ and 22° 20′ North Latitude, and 154° 55′ and 160° 15′ West Longitude from [Gree]nwich, and stretch along in a direction [W.] N. W. and E. S. E. about 350 miles, and [cont]ain about 6000 square miles.

	LENGTH.	BREADTH.	FT. HIGH.	SQ. MILES.	POPUL'N.*
[illegible]i,	88	68	13,953	4000	24,447
[illegible]	48	29	10,200	600	17,574
[illegible]	46	23	3,800	520	19,126
[illegible]i,	33	28	4,800	520	6,900
[illegible]i,	40	9	2,800	170	3,607
[illegible]	17	9	1,600	100	600
[illegible]	8	7	800	80	790
[illegible]we,	11	8	400	60	
[illegible] or Bird Island,	Islets, scarcely more than barren rocks.				73,134

*By official census of 1853.

[Th]e average temperature in low southern and [weste]rn locations, is 75°; in northern and east[ern] 72°. The lofty mountains are cool, and at [their] summits cold. A summary of meteorologi[cal] observations, made by the missionaries at [Hon]olulu, from August, 1821, to July, 1822, [gave] the mean temperature to be 75°; N. E. winds three-fourths of the year; rain on [...] days; highest heat observed in the shade, [...], lowest 59°. During the months of Janu[ary] and February, the thermometer sometimes [fa]lls to 53° and 54° during the night.

HAWAII.

This island consists essentially of the three mountains of Mauna Kea, (13,953 feet high,) Mauna Loa, (13,760 feet high,) and Hualalai, (about 11,000 feet high,) of the elevated plain between these mountains, and of the more or less gentle slopes from their bases to the sea. On the windward side, owing to the abundant rains, vegetation is luxuriant. Here is situated the fine harbor (the only one on this side) and pleasant village of Hilo, in the vicinity of which are three sugar plantations, managed by Chinese, and at present doing well. Coffee attains to a large growth, and bears well on this side of the island, but the quality is not considered equal to that raised on the leeward side. From Hilo, round to Kohala, facing the north-east trade-winds, the land near the sea is composed of precipitous bluffs, broken frequently by enormous gulches, or ravines, through which the mountain streams from the side of Mauna Kea, debouch into the ocean. Though bleak from its constant exposure to the strong trades, this portion of Hawaii is rich in agricultural resources, and as a grazing section is unsurpassed. The "Kona" or leeward side of the island, which is formed by the S. W. slope of Mount Hualalai, presents to the eye, on passing along the shore, a very desolate appearance, and in fact, from Kawaihae to Kealakekua, and thence quite round to Kau, on the S. W., varying in width from a half to two miles from the beach, there seems to be little else than black lava rock, the debris of extinct volcanic action. But from Kailua to Kealakekua, at an elevation of from 500 to 2000 feet, the soil among the decomposing lava seems of inexhaustible richness. There are not far from 100,000 acres of arable land in this district, of which about one-fifth, or 20,000 acres, are suitable for the cultivation of coffee. Its present product, however, does not much exceed 100,000 pounds of coffee per annum in the most favorable seasons. The finest oranges on the islands are grown here, and it is pretty generally conceded that this is the best fruit district on the islands. Good judges have pronounced the Kona coffee the best grown on the islands, and oranges, pineapples, grapes, mangoes, and a variety of other fruits, are said to attain to a perfection rarely found in other Hawaiian localities. The common castor-oil plant is frequently seen here with a trunk five or six inches in diameter, and branching out like a tree, the lowest branches several feet from the ground.

The south-western side of the island, which forms the district of Kau, 65 miles in length, is, in most parts, like the Kona side, composed of barren rocks from the sea for several miles inland to where the arable land commences, and spreads out into a broad plain, gradually ascending to the mountains, admirably fitted for pasturage. Latterly the cultivation of wheat has been introduced in the more elevated portions of Kau, and has been found to succeed well.

The active volcano of Kilauea, and the intermittent one of Mauna Loa, are well known. The crater of Hualalai has been quiet since about the beginning of this century. It has been rarely visited, though said to be well worth seeing. The crater is described as being large and irregular from cones and chasms, but having near the center a black-mouthed pit of no great diameter, but of immense depth, its sides as smooth as glass. Our informant (a respectable foreigner) says that he threw a large rock into it, and, if he noted the seconds correctly, the depth reached before it struck anything must have been considerably over one thousand feet, while the stone was heard still falling at a much greater depth.

On the sides of Mauna Kea, at an elevation of from 6,000 to 11,000 feet, roam large herds of wild cattle, composed of the descendants of a number turned loose on the mountain in the times of Kamehameha I., recruited largely, no doubt, by runaways from the tame herds of Waimea. This last is a level plain, about 20 miles wide, between the Kohala mountains on the N. E., and the highlands of Mauna Kea on the S. W. It was formerly covered with a forest of kukui and ohia trees, but the rapid increase of cattle there within the last thirty years, has resulted in the utter destruction of the forest, and a consequent change of climate. Old residents speak of the climate of Waimea as having been moist and salubrious, whereas at present it is dry, but little rain falling the year round, and exposed to the full force of the cold trade-wind, which, at that elevation, about 4000 feet, is quite chilling.

MAUI.

This island, the next in size and position to Hawaii, being separated from the latter by a channel about 30 miles wide, consists of two mountain masses, separated by an isthmus some six miles in width from sea to sea, and from six to ten miles in length. Eastern Maui is much higher than Western, consisting chiefly of Haleakala, (House of the Sun,) 10,200 feet high, and its immense slopes. It also includes much the most arable land, and here are situated two fine sugar plantations, the East Maui Plantation, under the direction of A. H. Spencer, and the Brewer Plantation, L. L. Torbert, manager. Others are projected, or in progress of planting. East Maui possesses some of the finest sugar lands on the group. Here also are situated the immense *kula* lands, or arable plains, which a few years ago supplied the Irish potatoes with which a brisk trade was carried on with California, and from which at present the whalers are furnished with most of their supplies. At Makawao are the wheat lands of the group—at least here is the spot where the cultivation of cereals has been a success. About 2000 acres are under cultivation, with a product of 20,000 bushels per annum. The business is steadily increasing.

The isthmus of Waikapu lies but little above the level of the sea, and is composed of dry sand. Since the goats and cattle have been allowed to run there, they have destroyed the vines and bushes which served to confine the sand on the windward side, and the "dunes" have been driven nearly to the leeward beach, and will soon usurp the whole of the lower part of the isthmus. The wind here rushes across in fierce gusts between the two divisions of the island, and renders the navigation of the bay at times quite dangerous. On the western slope of the isthmus, and towards the windward side, lie the cultivated portions of Waikapu and Wailuku, which, with the valleys behind them, are very fertile. The level plain of Lahaina, composed of the alluvial washed from the hills in the rear of the town, is remarkably rich, and capable of producing largely of most kinds of fruits and vegetables. Grapes grow rapidly, bear profusely, and are of a fine flavor. With these exceptions, most of West Maui not inaccessibly mountainous, is grazing land.

KAHOOLAWE

Is situated about 24 miles W. S. W. from Lahaina, off the N. W. side of East Maui, about 12 miles. It is quite dry, but might perhaps make a sheep pasture. It has been but little used hitherto, except occasionally in former years as a penal settlement. Natives occasionally go over there for a few months for fishing purposes, or during the rainy season to plant melons and sweet potatoes. The island is said to contain 25,600 acres, of which about 3000 is table land.

MOLOKINI

[Is a] small, bare, uninhabited rock in the channel about midway between Kahoolawe and East Maui.

LANAI

Lies opposite Lahaina at a distance of from eight to twelve miles, and is about 16 miles long by about 8 wide. Though higher than Kahoolawe, it is too low to receive a large quantity of rain, and though there are a few good lands upon it, the population is scanty. There is but one permanent stream on the island, that running down the valley of Maunalei, which opens to the N. E., directly facing Kaluaaha, on Molokai. The Mormons have tried for some time to make Lanai their headquarters in the group, but with indifferent success.

It is said that Lanai, if turned bottom up into the crater of Haleakala, would about fill it.

MOLOKAI.

This island is long and narrow, the eastern end much the highest point, rising into mountains nearly three thousand feet high, and sloping off gradually to the western point. The arable land on the windward side is narrow, and much of the windward coast is formed by bold precipices of bare lava rock, rendered wild and jagged in appearance by frequent frightful gulches and ravines. The natives, in speaking of Molokai, term it *ka aina pali*,—a land of precipices. Some of the windward portions for a large part of the year can be approached only by sea, and that in good weather, the foot-paths over the mountains being often impassible. The leeward side presents a much more gentle slope to the sea and contains some fine land both for culture and grazing. Some of the valleys towards the eastern end present scenery unsurpassed in magnificence. The western end of the island is too low and dry to be worth much, unless perhaps for sheep pasture. The population of Molokai is apparently more industrious and enterprising and also healthier than that of most of the other islands of the group. Since 1853 the population has been gradually increasing. There are one or two dairy farms on the island, from which an excellent article of butter is sent to the Honolulu market, and occasionally some very fine cattle. There is an indentation on the leeward side of the island at a place called Kalae, which at a moderate expense might be converted into a good harbor for coasters. At present only very small vessels can get over the bar.

OAHU.

Commercially, Oahu is the most important island of the group. It is formed by two ranges of mountains, the highest of which—Konahuanui at the pass of Nuuanu—is about four thousand feet above the level of the sea. One of these mountain ranges runs from Makapuu point at the eastern end of the island along near the windward shore till it sinks into the low plain of coral rock at Kahuku; the other, or Waianae range, commencing on the leeward side of Ewa at Barber's point, and running some ten or twelve miles towards the first range, with which it makes an angle, then turning with a sharp elbow and running down to Kaena point, leaving Waialua on the right or windward side. The first range presents to windward for almost its whole length, a perpendicular wall of rock several thousand feet high, with comparatively level land extending from its base to the sea, varying in width from nothing, as at Makapuu pali, or ten rods, as at Dr. Judd's land, to six or seven miles opposite the pali of Nuuanu. Through this low land at intervals are thrown out from the main range several ridges or spurs of hills, usually ending at or near the sea with an extinct crater; as it were ribs from the back-bone. The soil of the low land mentioned is generally good, and pretty well watered. The climate, as on the windward side of all the islands, is more moist and several degress cooler than on the leeward side.

Honolulu, the seat of the Hawaiian government and the commercial emporium of the islands, is situated on the leeward or west side of the island, on a level plain directly opposite the beautiful valley of Nuuanu. The city has slowly but constantly increased in size during the past ten years, and its population amounts to between 8000 and 9000 inhabitants, of whom 1500 are foreigners. It has a fine capacious harbor, formed by the coral reef, capable of accommodating 200 vessels at a time, and is perfectly safe in all weathers.

The leeward side of the mountains presents a gentle slope. The Kona, or Honolulu district, is divided like the Koolau or windward district by the spurs of the mountains into three distinct divisions. The first is of some three or four miles extent, from Makapuu to Koko Head; second from Koko Head to Diamond Head, ten or twelve miles; and third from Diamond Head to Moanalua ridge, including the city of Honolulu, some eight to ten miles. Had Punch-Bowl Hill extended farther seaward, it would have made another division.

From Moanalua ridge to Barber's point or Waianae mountains, is the Ewa district. The most remarkable feature of this is the so called "Pearl River," a large and irregular shaped lagoon, somewhat freshened at its inland extremities by the streams that run into it, but connecting with the sea by a number of navigable passages. It is incorrectly represented on the maps, being in fact much cut up by points and islands. Its main channels and open spaces are, however, with the exception of the bar at the mouth, deep enough for any vessel. Jarvis is wrong in calling the adjacent land dry and barren compared with Honolulu. The immense flats between it and the sea and those that stretch off beyond it for seven or eight miles to Barber's point, with a width of five or six miles, are, it is true, barren enough, being great stretches of "clinkers," broken masses of all sizes, with solid rock beneath of feldspathic lava, with here and there a deep pit or sudden crevice. Bushes and scattered tufts of grass keep fat the cattle that range there, and occasionally serve to conceal the mouth of a pit from unwary cattle or horses. Along the inland shore of Pearl River is a strip of very fertile land, varying in breadth, some of which is now cultivated with taro and bananas, but a large proportion is lying idle. Then the land rises gently into the elevated plain which extends between the two mountain ranges mentioned previously, towards Waialua, descending somewhat more steeply into the lowlands of Waialua at a distance of two or three miles from the sea. This plain is interrupted by several deep gulches—something like the California cañons, which yawn in the traveler's face with scarce any warning. Their courses are very irregular—one runs from the main range of mountains zigzag across the plain towards the Waialua mountains, until at about the elbow or angle, when it turns and follows along their base to the sea at Waialua. The slope of the mountains on the right from Moanalua to Waialua presents much land in its valleys and on its small elevated plains which, were the island fully peopled, would undoubtedly well repay cultivation. In some of the valleys large quantities of excellent oranges are already raised. Most of the plain, say nine miles by twelve, is grazing land. The heads of the valleys and the ridge of the main range are heavily timbered with kukui, ohia and some koa, and occupied now only by wild cattle and hogs. Turkeys and chickens, too, are numerous—estrays from domesticated stock. The Waialua flat, some two or three miles by about five, is very fertile, and the climate to many more agreeable than Koolau or Honolulu. From Waialua to Kahuku the surface is hilly, and merely a good pasture. Kahuku is quite a level plain, some five or six miles by two, extending from Waimea to Kahuku point. It is but slightly elevated above the sea, and consists of soil-covered coral in position, evidently little disturbed by its upheaval. At many of the frequent holes and crevices in it may be seen streams of fine clear and cool fresh water, making their subterranean way three or four feet below the surface from the mountains to their outlets in the sea below low water mark.

The Waianae district, protected by its mountain range from the trades and exposed fully to the afternoon sun, is for the most part very warm, though a strong gust from the trade wind will sometimes break over with violence. But a small portion of Waianae is arable land, by far the major part being devoted to grazing purposes, for which it is admirably adapted, producing probably the best beef on the island for the table.

The main range of the Oahu mountains has a break or passage through it at the Nuuanu valley, often described as the celebrated "pali of Nuuanu," and is passable for footmen at the heads of several of the valleys. The Waianae mountains have but one path over them, that near the "elbow" at Lihue—other access or exit to or from the district is only by water or round the Ewa or Kaena ends of the range. The last is a difficult and at times a dangerous path.

Each of the above districts of Oahu has, even at the same elevation above the sea, its peculiar climate, perceptible to an ordinary observer. The difference is due to different degrees of moisture and of exposure to or shelter from the trade winds. Those winds are also modified very much by the extent of land over which they have blown after leaving the sea, and by the character of that land, as covered with verdure or bare rock and earth made scorching hot by the rays of the sun.

Oahu is more properly and naturally a grazing than an agricultural island, though the quantity of arable land scattered at intervals over its surface is amply sufficient to support a large population.

KAUAI.

Generally called the oldest of the group, is one of the pleasantest. It is separated from Oahu by a channel about 80 miles wide. The difference of latitude between Kauai and the southern part of Hawaii is enough to make a perceptible difference in climate. The shape of the island also, allowing one (as at Lihue and Wailua) frequently to take in a wide stretch of landscape without having his view bounded by the sea—allowing him to feel as if he was in a "great country"—makes the scenery, which is very beautiful in itself, much admired by those whose insulated vision has perhaps for years ranged only over the narrow strip of land between the Honolulu hills and harbor. The eye, which for a long time has found every view bounded by the ocean, (as is necessarily the case on most of the islands) making the observer aware of his insulated, almost imprisoned life, finds great relief in a view which allows it to strain itself to see further into land stretching beyond its bounds, without finally resting on the white spray of the breakers. Consequently, the beauties of Kauai,—Hanalei valley, Hanapepe water-fall, Koloa spouting-rock, (there are many others on the islands) the Mana singing-sands, &c.,—have been written and printed about sufficiently. The last, which have seemed a puzzle to some tourists are very easily explained. The piles of sharp, clear sea-sand on the beach, under a hot sun, when set in motion by the hand or the wind, or perhaps sometimes by their own expansion from heat, in their friction on each other give out a rather faint but clear and distinct tinkling sound. The peculiar shape of the sand-particles, traceable to the original rock from which they have been separated may account for the non-observance of the same phenomenon elsewhere. In the morning or after sundown, when moist with the dew, or after a rain, they are silent.

The tract of arable land on Kauai adapted to grazing or planting, stretches from Hanalei to Hanapepe valley. Portions of this island appear better adapted to agriculture than the other islands. There are two coffee plantations at Hanalei, a sugar plantation at Nawiliwili and one at Koloa. This portion of the island is well watered with frequent rains and streams. The principal ports of the island are Hanalei on the north side, Nawiliwili and Koloa on the south-east, and Waimea on the south. The Waimea district being the lee of the island, is dry and adapted to cultivation only in the valleys. That part of the island stretching from Mana point around the western side to Hanalei, is rocky, dry, barren and uninhabited. The same remark may be made of all the islands as of Kauai, that the want of capital with an industrious population is the only thing needed to develope resources now lying almost wholly idle.

NIIHAU.

This island, the last of the group which is inhabited, lies in a S. W. direction from the Kona side of Kauai, distant about 8 miles. It has a range of hills some 800 feet high, running through it from the weather end, along near the eastern shore, nearly to the southern point. The land on the eastern side of these mountains is very narrow, with but a sparse population; but on the western side there is a level plain of some four or five miles in width, excellent land for sweet potatoes, melons, &c. There is no fresh water on the island, except rain water, preserved by the natives in some cisterns of rock near the south end.

LEHUA.

About three-quarters of a mile off the western side of Niihau, is a high and somewhat broken peak, apparently two sides of a crater, of which the S. W. portion has fallen in, leaving the inside face exposed in that direction—a black and broken precipice. Jarves calls it 1000 feet high, but 500 feet would be nearer correct. The faces towards Kauai and Niihau are covered with scattered tufts of grass, among which numerous wild rabbits find a living. The most singular thing on the island is a small perennial spring of excellent fresh water, a few feet above high water mark. The rock itself is lower than the Niihau mountains, and neither of them receive water enough to supply any spring. Consequently the water must come from the mountains of Kauai, whose nearest shore is at least twelve miles distant.

KAULA.

Is in sight from Niihau, and some seven or eight miles off its S. W. point. It is a barren rock, abounding in sea-fowl and their eggs, for which the natives occasionally visit it. A landing can be effected only in the calmest weather, as the surf breaks very heavily at all times.

NIIHOA.

Or Bird Island, about 120 miles N. W. from Kauai, was always reckoned by the natives as belonging to the Hawaiian group, and in ancient times was not unfreqently visited by the chiefs. Fish, birds and eggs, as well as sea-lions, and perhaps turtle, they obtained there—and these comprise the list of its productions. It is a precipitous rock, described by Captain John Paty as 400 feet high, one and a half miles long, and half a mile wide. A landing can seldom be accomplished with safety with ordinary boats, though canoes might succeed better.